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DEPARTMENT OF RED CROSS NURSING

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After completing a four months' study of American Red Cross nursing activities in various countries of Europe, Clara D. Noyes, Director of the Department of Nursing, National Headquarters, American Red Cross, before sailing for this country made a special trip to Bordeaux, France, for the purpose of visiting the hospital in connection with which the Florence Nightingale School of Nursing has been established.

As chairman of the Joint Boards of Directors of the three national nursing associations, and representing the nurses of this country, Miss Noyes conferred with Dr. Anna Hamilton, Superintendent of the Hospital, and the Training School Committee upon the plan for the building and visited the plot of ground on which the school will be erected as the American Nurses' Memorial to their sister nurses who died in line of duty during the World War. She also made a general study of the situation in view of advising the school committee as to the best means of safeguarding the educational standards of the school, as interpreted by the American Nurses' Association.

When announcement of Miss Noyes' tour was made in August, it was hoped by Dr. Hamilton and the committee that the project might be far enough advanced for Miss Noyes, representing the nurses of America, to lay the corner stone of the building upon her arrival. However, this was not possible, as the contract had not yet been placed.

Prior to Miss Noyes' visit, Lyda W. Anderson, Assistant Chief Nurse of the Commission to Europe, made an inspection of the hospital and submitted a report so admirable in character and so full in description that we are venturing to quote such portions of it as might be helpful to the nurses of this country endeavoring to visualize the school:

I was interested in learning something of the history of this institution in connection with which American nurses are erecting a memorial in tribute to our nurses who died in service. The hospital has operated about 57 years and was built with the particular purpose of caring for all foreign officers and seafaring men and at the same time of meeting the hospital needs of residents of Bordeaux. They have given a cordial welcome as well as the best of medical and scientific attention at a very nominal fee, (at present 8 francs per day) to about 3,000 of these sailors from ten foreign countries, the largest number from Scandinavia. This tradition continues and I found two American sailors very comfortably cared for in the ward of the hospital.

In planning the hospital it was considered very important that a building be erected which would suggest as little as possible a hospital, because of the great prejudice against such institutions at that time; and hospital facilities and conveniences were, therefore, given little consideration, the result being a building (the one still in use) where there is a tremendous dissipation of time and energy in caring for the sick.

The hospital is supported by voluntary contributions and the small returns from pay patients. The rooms and wards are all attractive, the patients show the best of care, and every part of the hospital was in perfect order. Many of the rooms had been freshly decorated, this improvement paid for from the proceeds of a bazaar given by the nurses of the hospital.

In planning the hospital there was no consideration given the education of the nurses. The school, which now numbers twenty-six pupils, was organized eighteen years ago. Mlle. Anna Hamilton, a doctor of medicine, has been the superintendent of the hospital and directrice of nurses with the assistance of Mlle. Mignot, a graduate nurse "sous directrice," since the school was established. Dr. Hamilton recognized, as soon as she began her professional career, that a physician was seriously handicapped in effecting the recovery of his patients without scientific nursing care. She, therefore, concluded to devote her time to creating such nursing care. The result is a school in connection with the hospital, now named the "Florence Nightingale School," which compares well with the standard schools of America. The students are young women of education, several of them college women,—from the best families, and are called upon to meet the most rigid requirements of the standard schools of any country. They receive education and training in medical and surgical nursing, nursing care of infants and children and obstetrical nursing. The teaching is thorough and as advanced in practical experience as it is possible in a hospital of sixty beds. They learn practical housekeeping in a most thorough way, including cookery, elements of pharmacy, and details of the administration of small institutions. It is evident that every facility for the education of the nurses which this small hospital possesses has been taken advantage of.

The department of visiting nursing is conducted in a modern, systematic, advanced way, and occupies a most delightful and well planned building, erected by the American Red Cross. It includes infant welfare, school nursing, and general home visiting. The students of the school receive experience in this branch of nursing under the direction of graduate nurses.

This high grade nursing school has developed solely through Dr. Anna Hamilton's perseverance in neutralizing all prejudices and overcoming tremendous obstacles to realize her vision of the well educated, well born French woman as a thoroughly trained scientific nurse, assisting the physician in disease prevention and fulfilling every essential of the requirements as expressed by Florence Nightingale.

The American training school superintendent may have much difficulty upholding the best standards, but she has at all times a powerful nursing organization back of her and the best men of the medical profession supporting her. Dr. Hamilton has struggled alone and should now have the strongest coöperation of those who are interested in seeing nursing methods in France and on the European continent reformed and standardized.

The serious handicap in furthering the advancement of the school is the lack of a home for the students with necessary demonstration room for preliminary instruction and the laboratory facilities for practical teaching of the sciences,

as well as suitable living quarters to satisfy the needs of the type of student sought.

The Rockefeller Institute has given ten scholarships for pupils to receive general nursing education in the Florence Nightingale School, with part of the last year devoted to public health nursing instruction. These pupils are already selected, awaiting admission, but delayed because of want of room in the school.

Mlle. E. Bosc, an old resident of Bordeaux, learning of the high standard of work of the hospital and the reputation of the graduates of the school, made a gift to the institution before her death of her estate, "Bagatelle," an estate of sixteen acres, a good furnished home just outside of the city limits, to be used as a building site and grounds for a hospital and a school for nurses. It is believed that Bordeaux can well support a 200-bed hospital.

Dr. Hamilton desires the new school building begun at once, because of the immediate need for a home and because of the psychological effect it would have on the people, stimulating keener interest in the new hospital and contributions to the necessary fund.

The construction plans for the Florence Nightingale School as offered your committee will cost about 890,000 francs, approximately 100,000 francs more than the promised gift, calculating a good rate of exchange, but not taking into consideration any accrued interest on the fund. The possibility of reducing the proposed plan to bring the cost within the sum allotted was discussed with the architect. This could be done by omitting the end rooms on each wing. It would reduce the capacity twenty rooms as per present plan, but with readjustments, made as recommended by Miss Noyes and Miss Hay, (which makes possible the utilization of some additional rooms as bedrooms, now planned for other purposes) it is believed that a building could be constructed to meet the needs of the school for the next five years within the limit of the fund.

The building thus curtailed would be a finished building (and that I think should be understood), that is, it would not be "lop-sided" with the one whole wing left off but an equal portion of each wing would be omitted without (quoting the architect) "in any way deranging the architectural line." I mention the latter as an important point, feeling that the American nurses wish their memorial to be a finished building complete in itself. If additional rooms need to be added in the future when the hospital has grown to a 200-bed capacity, this can always be done without in the least disturbing the architecture of the building as at present planned.

The fund of \$50,000 has already been slightly oversubscribed. Should there be funds remaining from the actual expenditure for the building, these will probably be used for additional equipment. Dr. Hamilton has expressed herself as confident that a building can be constructed to meet the needs of the school for the next five years, within the \$50,000 limit.

Over the entrances of the building, in front and back, will appear the inscription "American Nurses' Memorial." In the large central hall, a bronze tablet will be hung upon which a more detailed general statement describing the gift will be given. Another tablet of bronze will also be placed in the library, stating that it is a memorial to Amabel Scharf Roberts, contributed by the Alumnae Association of the Presbyterian Hospital Training School for Nurses, New York City.

Commenting upon the impressions of her visit to the site, "Bagatelle," for the school Miss Noyes says:

The plot of ground which contains sixteen acres, is most admirably situated. There are beautiful gardens including forty fruit trees and an old French manor house, in which there are some delightful specimens of old furniture. This lends a very inspiring background.

The final plan of the building includes all the features of an up-to-date modern school. Single bedrooms, each with running water; ample baths; a large assembly hall; library, fiction and technical; lecture hall; demonstration room; and cooking school are some of the facilities it offers. Instead of nurses' rooms being numbered, they will naively bear the names of flowers.

At a tea given for Miss Noyes at which the trustees of the hospital were present, a delightful note of sociability was struck when the nurses sang some French national airs and a selection from the opera "Orpheus." This was a charming fete for the guests, for there were many beautiful rich voices in the group.

The finished work done by the nurses in the present school and hospital, the cleanliness of the lavatories and kitchens; and a general air of refinement was found everywhere. The dining room, living rooms and bedrooms of the nurses are particularly attractive and bespeak a deep cultural influence.

The standard of nursing prevailing in the Nightingale School compares favorably with the best schools in America. American nurses will be surprised to learn that the pupil nurses pay a fee amounting to between \$12 and \$14 a month. This would seem impossible even in a country where nursing has made such rapid progress as in America.

No finer memorial could have been erected to the nurses who died in service than a modern school building to which the Nightingale School, already so well established, may be transplanted to carry on to future generations of the young women of France, the ideals and standards of American nurses.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

The American Red Cross is receiving a large number of applications from nurses for work overseas with the Child Welfare Units. While it is true that doctors and social workers are being enrolled in anticipation of the needs of those countries, there are at present an ample number of nurses in Europe to meet the present needs.

When nurses are required for this service, the Department of Nursing will work through its Division offices in securing the number needed. With the great demand for public health and other nurses in this country, we urge the nurses to apply for inclusion in the group of social service workers, even though they may have had some experience in medical social service work in this country. It is felt that as only a small number of social workers may be sent abroad, they should be those who have had the best social training.